

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 05770 01 OF 02 060743Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01
AID-05 TRSE-00 DHA-02 /070 W
-----060746Z 079729 /21/15

O P 040940Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2071
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY
AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY
AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 5770

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT--PARAS TWO AND SEVEN)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PK
SUBJ: POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN

1. THE FIRST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ON JUNE 3 BETWEEN THE PNA AND
PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO ESTABLISHED, ACCORDING TO THE
PARTICIPANTS, AN AMICABLE SETTING FOR THE TALKS TO FOLLOW.
THE OUTCOME OF THE MEETING, HEADLINED IN ALL OF PAKISTAN'S
MAJOR DAILIES ON JUNE 4, SEEMED TO CONFIRM EARLIER SPECULATION
THAT CERTAIN UNDERSTANDINGS HAD BEEN REACHED PRIOR TO THE START
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 05770 01 OF 02 060743Z

OF THE TALKS. THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY PRIME MINISTER
BHUTTO, FINANCE MINISTER HAFEEZ PIRZADA AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
MINISTER KAUSAR NIAZI REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT SIDE.
THE PNA WAS REPRESENTED BY MUFTI MAHMUD, NAWABZADA NASRULLAH,
AND PROFESSOR GHAFOR. AT THE END OF THE MEETING A JOINT
PRESS STATEMENT WAS RELEASED BY THE DESIGNATED SPOKESMEN OF
THE TWO SIDES, PROFESSOR GHAFOR FOR THE PNA, AND KAUSAR

NIAZI FOR THE PPP. THE TWO MEN ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD ISSUE A PRESS STATEMENT AT THE END OF EACH OF THE MEETINGS.

2. THE STATEMENT SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO RELEASE THE THREE PNA LEADERS, ASGHAR KHAN, ASHRAF KHAFXN AND SHAH AHMAD NOORANI, REMAINING IN JAIL AS WELL AS ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD BEEN ARRESTED AFTER THE MARCH 7 ELECTIONS UNDER SECTION 144 (BANNING DEMONSTRATIONS AND GATHERINGS). THE GOVERNMENT ALSO AGREED THAT NO NEW ARRESTS WOULD BE MADE UNDER SECTION 144. IN RETURN THE PNA HAS AGREED TO HALT ALL DEMONSTRATIONS AND STREET AGITATION. PRIOR PRESS CENSORSHIP HAS BEEN HALTED AND BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED TO REFRAIN FROM ISSUING STATEMENTS OR HOLDING PUBLIC MEETINGS WHICH WOULD DISRUPT THE CONDUCTIVE ATMOSPHERE THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD LIKE DURING THE TALKS.

3. NEWSPAPERS ALSO REPORTED THAT THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR AND GENERAL ZIAUL HAQ, THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, HAD ATTENDED THE MEETING FOR A SHORT PERIOD. THEIR PRESENCE WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE PNA DESIRE TO DISMISS THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW AND THE EMERGENCY. IT WAS DECIDED THAT THIS ISSUE WOULD BE TAKEN UP AT THE NEXT SESSION.

4. BHUTTO'S AGREEMENT TO HOLD NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS SEEMS WELL ESTABLISHED AS THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED PAKISTAN TIMES, IN AN ARTICLE BY H.K. BURKI, REPORTED THAT IF PNA STATEMENTS THAT THE PM HAD ACCEPTED THE IDEA OF NEW ELECTIONS ARE TRUE, "AND THIS MAY WELL BE TRUE," THEN THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 05770 01 OF 02 060743Z

MAJOR ISSUE IN THE UPCOMING NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUITABLE MODALITIES AND THE TIMING OF THE ELECTIONS.

5. THE JOINT STATEMENT TO THE PRESS NOTED THAT A SECOND MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES WOULD TAKE PLACE ON MONDAY, JUNE 6, AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE AS WAS THE FIRST MEETING. REPORTEDLY, THE REASON THE TALKS WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY RATHER THAN SUNDAY IS TO GIVE BOTH SIDES TIME TO CONFER WITH THEIR COLLEAGUES. THE PNA HAD EARLIER INSISTED THAT THE TALKS MUST BE HELD DAILY UNTIL THE DIFFERENCES ARE RESOLVED.

6. MARTIAL LAW: THE SUPREME COURT HAS REFUSED TO GRANT A STAY TO THE LAHORE HIGH COURT DECISION THAT THE MARTIAL LAW COURT SYSTEM IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL. THE COURT, WHILE AGREEING TO HEAR ARGUMENTS ON THE CASE BEGINNING ON JUNE 6, FOUND THAT THE JUDGEMENT OF THE LAHORE HIGH COURT IS PRIMA FACIE SUPPORTED BY COGENT REASONS AND THAT, THEREFORE, THE SUPREME COURT DOES NOT CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE TO SUSPEND THE HIGH COURT

RULING UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT CAN ESTABLISH THAT THE REASONING
BEHIND THE RULING IS UNTENABLE.

7. PROCESSIONS: NAWA-I-WAQT AND JANG, THE TWO MAJOR URDU
DAILIES, ON JUNE 4, REPORTED THAT THERE WERE MINOR PROCESSIONS
IN KARACHI, LAHORE, AND RAWALPINDI ON JUNE 3. THE DEMONSTRATIONS
IN LAHORE AND RAWALPINDI WERE BROKEN UP BY POLICE LATHI
CHARGES WITH REPORTS THAT TEN PEOPLE WERE INJURED DURING THE

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 05770 02 OF 02 041128Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 5770

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

POLICE ACTION IN LAHORE. THE KARACHI DEMONSTRATION WAS
DESCRIBED AS PEACEFUL.

8. MUFTI MAHMUD, SPEAKING TO A CONGREGATION AFTER FRIDAY
PRAYERS ON JUNE 3, DENIED PPP ALLEGATIONS THAT THE PNA
HAD BEEN RECEIVING DOLLARS IN SUPPORT OF THEIR MOVEMENT.
MUFTI SAHIB TOLD THE MEETING THAT IF SUCH FUNDS HAD BEEN
EARMARKED FOR THE PNA THEY MUST HAVE BEEN STOLEN ON THE
WAY BECAUSE THE PNA HAS NEVER RECEIVED ANY OF THE MONEY.

9. ANTI-AMERICAN ARTICLES: THERE WERE MINOR ALLUSIONS TO THE
ANTI-AMERICAN CAMPAIGN ON THE PAGES OF THE JUNE 4 EDITION OF
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 05770 02 OF 02 041128Z

THE PAKISTAN TIMES. AN XYZ EDITORIAL ONCE AGAIN RAISED THE CANARD
THAT THE PNA ACTIONS WERE BEING DIRECTED BY A COMPUTER IN
WASHINGTON. THE PAPER ALSO GAVE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE ON THE INSIDE
PAGES
TO A PROVINCIAL MINISTER'S SPEECH DENOUNCING THE UNITED
STATES.
CONSTABLE

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